

WLECHA Awards Committee,

I would like to nominate SGT Mackenzie Koster and K9 Murphy for the Meritorious Track with Apprehension Award for their actions on Sunday, July 24th, 2022 at 0330 hours.

City of Franklin officers were involved in a 3.2 mile pursuit of a stolen vehicle which was terminated due to heavy rain and high rate of speed. The vehicle was located shortly after terminating crashed and unoccupied. SGT Koster responded to the scene and began a track of the suspects at 0337 hours.

Utilizing scent specific "man trailing" tracking, SGT Koster swabbed the steering wheel of the stolen vehicle and presented it to K9 Murphy. K9 Murphy started the track and pulled east and went up the driveway and through the backyard of Lakeside Auto Sales, 5546 South 27th Street. K9 Murphy pulled through a small opening between a fence and a garage, continued east, and traveled through a thick tree line, leading into the backyard of 5543 South 26th Street. K9 Murphy tracked north through the back yard, and then alongside the north side of the house and through the front yard. K9 Murphy continued east over South 26th Street and onto the sidewalk on the south side of West Denis Avenue.

K9 Murphy pulled south from West Denis Avenue into the yard of 5545 South 25th Street. K9 Murphy pulled south through the yard between the house and a detached garage, and then turned west along the south side of the detached garage. At this location, SGT Koster observed a row of thick pine trees along the western property line of the neighboring backyard to the south, 5555 South 25th Street. The row of trees was bounded by a fence to the west.

As SGT Koster and K9 Murphy approached the northern end of the tree line, K9 Murphy's Behavior changed. SGT Koster recognized these behavior changes as indicators of K9 Murphy being in the close presence of human odor source. When the K9 team reached the pine trees, K9 Murphy stopped walking, his head was raised, and he was sniffing heavily, and then tried to climb onto the raised cement block wall around the trees so he could enter them. Believing there were likely subject(s) hiding in the pine trees, SGT Koster began to issue K9 warnings to the trees, advising any subject(s) to exit or K9 Murphy would be released. Two juvenile male subjects exited the pine trees, were ordered into a prone position, and then taken into custody at 0346 hours.

After the two suspects were secured in a squad car SGT Koster and K9 Murphy continued their tracking efforts. A white and black Croc style shoe, not belonging to the first two suspect, was located in the trees they were hiding. SGT Koster presented this item to K9 Murphy as a scent article and they began tracking again. K9 Murphy tracked through an opening at the southern end of the fence and went east, traveling through the yard of 5554 South 26th Street. K9 Murphy turned south on the sidewalk and continued past the dead end of the roadway, into the Parnell Woods Condominium complex in the 5600 block of South 27th Street. K9 Murphy traveled southeast through the parking lot, over West Parnell Ave, and through the Griffin's Hub car dealership parking lot, 5700 South 27th Street.

When they reached the next property to the south, Autumn Lake Healthcare, 5790 South 27th Street, K9 Murphy no longer appeared to be tracking. Due to the amount of time elapsed and with two suspects in custody, SGT Koster and K9 Murphy discontinued their tracking efforts and walked northbound on South 27th Street toward their squad car. Approximately one hundred feet to the north, SGT Koster observed a male subject emerge from the entrance drive of Parnell Woods. This subject turned around and started to walk east back up the driveway and into the complex and SGT

Koster loudly announced the presence of a police canine and ordered him to stop. The suspect began to run east and SGT Koster lost sight of him.

SGT Koster and K9 Murphy searched east from the entrance and searched through the apartment complex lot. Near the furthest eastern end of the parking lot, SGT Koster observed four male juvenile subjects walking west through the lot slightly southeast of their location. These subjects did not appear to see SGT Koster and K9 Murphy and they moved toward them. Once they were within approximately twenty feet, SGT Koster made verbal contact with them and ordered all four to a prone position on the ground. Clearly startled by the presence of K9 Murphy, they complied. All four suspects were taken into custody at 0418 hours.

I request that you award the Meritorious Track with Apprehension award based on the following. A total of 6 suspects were taken into custody and charged with Operating Motor Vehicle Without Owner's Consent, Obstructing an Officer and Felony Warrants. The track lasted approximately 40 minutes over various terrains (asphalt, concrete, grass) in a densely populated area. The track was stopped for an apprehension and K9 Murphy was redirected on another track leading to the other suspects. The weather at the time of the track was heavy rain with 15 mph winds out of the southwest and mid 70's.

Thank you for your time and consideration.